

"I would not live alway"

EVANGELIZED


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M. Sheeleigh,

Dec. 13, 1878.

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✓
“I Would not Live Alway.”

EVANGELIZED

BY ITS AUTHOR.

WITH THE STORY OF THE HYMN, AND A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF
ST. JOHN LAND.

✓✓
William Augustus Muhlenberg
Sold for the benefit of St. John Land, N. Y.

NEW YORK :
T. WHITTAKER & CO., PUBLISHERS,
No. 2 BIBLE HOUSE.

—
1871.

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JOHN ROSS & COMPANY, PRINTERS, 27 ROSE STREET, NEW YORK.

TO

The Rev. Philip Schaff, D.D.,

THE LOVING PATRON OF MY VERSES,

THIS LAST OF THEM

IS, WITH CHRISTIAN AFFECTION AND ESTEEM, INSCRIBED

BY HIS FRIEND AND BROTHER,

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG.

St. LUKE'S HOSPITAL, DECEMBER, 1871.

HYMN 187 OF PRAYER-BOOK COLLECTION.

I WOULD not live alway : I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way ;
The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here,
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer.

I would not live alway, thus fetter'd by sin,
Temptation without, and corruption within :
E'en the rapture of pardon is mingled with fears,
And the cup of thanksgiving with penitent tears.

I would not live alway : no, welcome the tomb ;
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom ;
There, sweet be my rest, till He bid me arise
To hail Him in triumph descending the skies.

Who, who would live alway, away from his God ;
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns? —

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Saviour and brethren, transported to greet ;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul?

A FABLE APOLOGETIC.

EVANGELIZE ME! quoth the Hymn. Am I a heathen, or an infidel, that I need any such process? Am I not already in good odor with evangelical Christians? Are they not satisfied with me in my present form? Am I not dear to them in their churches and their homes? Am I not a comfort to them in their sorrows, when they truly desire not to "live away"? Have I not been on the lips of departing saints, and afterward, in the funeral dirge, the sweet solace of the bereaved? Why, then, interfere with such sacred associations? Besides, it is too late. I am imprinted on memories, where I shall remain unchanged, and am stereotyped in well-nigh all the hymn-books of the land. Further, I am no longer your possession: I belong to the Christian public. No, my dear father, let well alone, and only be thankful for the blessed privilege you have enjoyed through your favored offspring.

So I am, my dear Hymn, replies the author, deeply, humbly thankful—more so than I dare express. Little could I have thought, nearly fifty years ago, when you were born, that you would be living now, a minister of consolation and holy joy. Here I am silent, lest if I said what I feel it would seem affectation. Far be it from me to violate the sacred associations of your past and present, which I am bound religiously to respect. Apart from any paternal fondness for my own—looking at you only objectively, as we say—I can have no slight regard for you, considering your cherished place in the affections of so many of the people of God. I hesitate to fault you, that I may not impliedly fault them, yet, you know, I have never deemed you perfect. Whenever I have thought how much you are loved, the satisfaction has always been dampened by the regret that you are not more distinctively Christian. In that regard, full pious as you are, I have always been sorry that you fail. For example, when the Christian looks wistfully to the life above, it is not so much from discontent, as you seem to make it, with the life below. It is not complaint that “storm after storm rises dark o’er the way”; much less is it a murmur at our earthly existence as if only a “few lurid mornings.” Such language belongs to occasional moods of depression, to which, indeed, most of us are liable; but they are not to be indulged. The good man, unless he be one of the

born children of woe, has too many sunshiny days to wish to be gone on account of his gloomy ones; and, though his sky be more or less overcast with cloud or storm, there is always "the braid of heavenly light," or the "rainbow in sight like unto an emerald" from the Sun of Righteousness, to cheer up his faith in the house of his pilgrimage.

"Fettered by sin" are rather strong words to express the "corruption of nature which remaineth in them that are regenerate"; and where is the freed man in Christ, if he still be enchained by evil?

"*Welcome* the tomb" is a real utterance in extreme trouble or suffering, or in the infirmities of age, but not ordinarily.

"*There*, sweet be my rest, till He bid me arise" sounds too much like a sleep of the soul, a state of unconsciousness, between death and the resurrection. Sweet repose in paradise, not in the tomb, is another thing.

"Flow *o'er* the bright plains" must be a mistake for "flow *through*."

I fear to say I do not quite affection your last line, for I should have to give my reason, and that might spoil it in holier minds than my own.

My chief dissatisfaction, however, is not with your faults, but with your defect in having too little evangelic faith.

But I must stop, as I would not be hypercritical, nor wanting in deference to the general estimate of your merit just as you are. That you will retain. Do not fear being neglected

in your old character. The devout sentimentality of younger days will not be displaced by the more sober product of age.

At any rate, I would leave something behind me of the same tenor as yourself, for which, though it may be your inferior in poesy, I must claim somewhat more of Gospel and more reality. May its future be as long as your past! May all who say with the patriarch, *I would not live alway*, be animated by the clearer faith of the apostle whose willingness to depart was "a desire to be with Christ, which is far better"!

"I would not live alway."—JOB.

"To depart and be with Christ, which is far better."—ST. PAUL.

I WOULD not live alway, I ask not to stay,
So my work be but done, upon life's toilsome way :
Whate'er be our portion of weal or of woe,
Enough are the days of our sojourn below.

I would not live alway, in conflict with sin,
With the wiles of the tempter, around and within ;
Though rejoicing in hope of the conqueror's song,
The warfare that wins it I would not prolong.

I would not live alway, for suffering to grieve,
And give but a sigh when I yearn to relieve ;
Glad in labors of mercy, yet sadden'd to know
How misery's dark waters, unebbing, still flow.

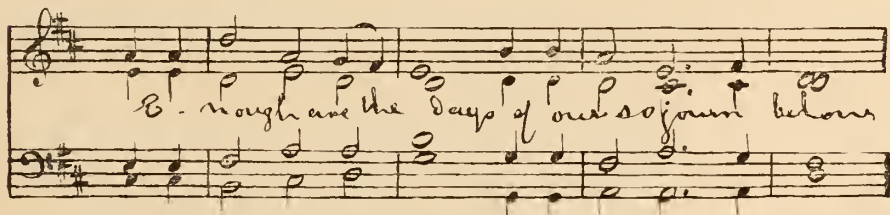
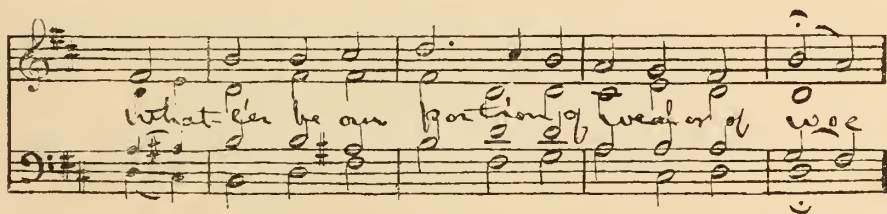
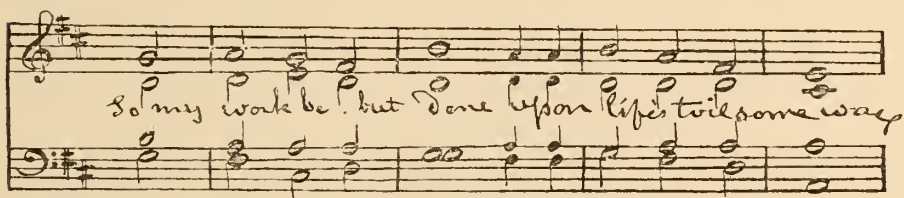
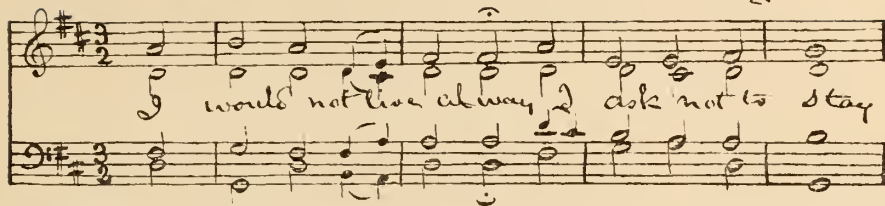
I would not live alway : the night of the tomb
 I'll dread not since Jesus hath passed through its gloom ;
 My Light and my Life ! by the way He then bless'd,
 When He calls me to come, would I here have my rest ?

No ! I would not live alway, away evermore
 From the presence of Him whom unseen I adore—
 From those mansions of peace He hath gone to prepare,
 That His brethren the house of His Father may share.

There, there, I'd live alway, those blessed to meet,
His brethren, *my* brethren, in fellowship sweet,
 From all ages, all nations, there gathered the whole,
 In the joys of His love, endless bliss of the soul.

Alleluia, Amen—henceforth be my song ;
 Live alway I shall, yea, alway as long
 As Christ Himself lives.—Not till He dies again
 Shall I cease in His glory and with Him to reign.

I would not live always,



"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will praise my God while I have my being."—PSALM civ. 33.

REMINISCENCES.

I SHOULD not think of appending a “history” of my hymn were it not that I am so often asked for it, and the present is a good opportunity for compliance. The much longer composition, of which it is a part, first appeared in a religious paper in Philadelphia—the *Episcopal Recorder*—in the year 1824. The legend that it was written on an occasion of private grief is a fancy. In the year 1826, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church appointed a committee to prepare a collection of hymns, to be added to the fifty-six which were then the whole number attached to the Prayer-Book. This measure was, in consequence of an awakened interest in hymnody, owing not a little—I may be pardoned for recording—to some publications of my own, one of them, “A Plea for Christian Hymns,” addressed to a special General Convention in the year —; another was a collection called “Church Poetry,” which, beginning to be used in several quarters, gave occasion to the remark in Convention that it was high time the Church acted in the matter, for, if she did not, the clergy would take it into their own hands. The above-mentioned committee consigned the business with which they were charged to a sub-committee, to report at the time of the next General Convention, 1829. Of that sub-committee I was a member, and had largely to do in making up its report, which contained several of my hymns, among

them the one before us, but not placed there, I need hardly say, by myself. One of them, "Shout the Glad Tidings," was written at the particular request of Bishop Hobart, who wanted something that would go to the tune by Avison, then popular to the words, by Moore, "Sound the Loud Timbrel." He liked the verses I made for the music, with which he was greatly taken, so well that he had them struck off before the hymns were published, and sung in Trinity Church on Christmas day. "I Would not Live Alway" was an abridgment of the original, which he had seen in the *Episcopal Recorder*, by Dr. H. Onderdonk, then rector of St. Ann's, Brooklyn, with some revision by myself. At the meeting of the whole committee, in 1829, the report of the sub-committee was presented, and each of the hymns was passed upon. When this came up, one of the members remarked that it was very sweet and pretty, but rather sentimental, upon which it was unanimously thrown out. Not suspected as the author, I voted against myself. That, I supposed, was the end of it. The committee, which sat until late at night at the house of Bishop White, agreed upon their report to the Convention, and adjourned. But the next morning, Dr. Onderdonk (who was not one of their number, but who, on invitation, had acted with the sub-committee, which, in fact, consisted of him and myself) called on me to enquire what had been done. Upon my telling him that among the rejected hymns was this one of mine, he said, "That will never do," and went about among the members of the committee, soliciting them to restore the hymn in their report, which accordingly they did; so that to him is due the credit of giving it to the Church. Among the contributions made by Dr. Onderdonk to our present collection, the best known are his two missionary hymns.

In these reminiscences, one singular fact must not be omitted. Some

eighteen years ago, a printer in Litchfield, Connecticut, wishing to disabuse the public mind as to the authorship of the hymn, declared, in a paper with which he had some connection, that he had written it himself. Of this, of course, I took no notice, but was not a little surprised when, in consequence of it, some of my brethren, editors of Church papers, hinted at their doubts on the subject. On being requested to assure them of the fact, I replied in a communication to one of them, stating, if they thought I was capable of letting the work of another pass for so many years as my own, they would not be sure of anything I might say.

But the better story of the hymn it is not for me to write, nor another, of a different kind, of the amusing compliments paid to the author, as if it were the solitary mark of his life.

*To make the preceding account complete, the following pieces referred
to in it are inserted, although often printed before.*

I WOULD not live alway—live alway below !
Oh, no, I'll not linger when bidden to go :
The days of our pilgrimage granted us here,
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer :
Would I shrink from the paths which the prophets of God,
Apostles, and martyrs, so joyfully trod ?
Like a spirit unblest o'er the earth would I roam,
While brethren and friends are all hastening home ?

I would not live alway : I ask not to stay,
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way ;
Where, seeking for rest, we but hover around,
Like the patriarch's bird, and no resting is found ;
Where hope, when she paints her gay bow in the air,
Leaves its brilliance to fade in the night of despair,
And joy's fleeting angel ne'er sheds a glad ray,
Save the gleam of the plumage that bears him away.

I would not live alway—thus fettered by sin,
Temptation without and corruption within :
In a moment of strength if I sever the chain,
Scarce the victory is mine, ere I'm captive again ;
E'en the rapture of pardon is mingled with fears,
And the cup of thanksgiving with penitent tears :
The festival trump calls for jubilant songs,
But my spirit her own *miserere* prolongs.

I would not live alway—no, welcome the tomb ;
 Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom ;
 Where He deigned to sleep, I'll too bow my head,
 All peaceful to slumber on that hallowed bed.
 Then the glorious daybreak, to follow that night,
 The orient gleam of the angels of light,
 With their clarion call for the sleepers to rise
 And chant forth their matins, away to the skies.

Who, who would live alway ? away from his God,
 Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
 Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
 And the noon-tide of glory eternally reigns ;
 Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
 Their Saviour and brethren, transported to greet,
 While the songs of salvation exultingly roll,
 And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.

That heavenly music ! what is it I hear ?
 The notes of the harpers ring sweet in mine ear !
 And see, soft unfolding those portals of gold,
 The King all arrayed in His beauty behold !
 O give me, O give me, the wings of a dove,
 To adore Him, be near Him, enrapt with His love ;
 I but wait for the summons, I list for the word—
 Alleluia—Amen—evermore with the Lord.

SINCE o'er Thy footstool here below,
Such radiant gems are strown,
Oh, what magnificence must glow,
My God, about Thy throne !
So brilliant here these drops of light,
There the full ocean rolls, how bright !

If night's blue curtain of the sky,
With thousand stars inwrought,
Hung like a royal canopy
With glittering diamonds fraught,
Be, Lord, Thy temple's outer veil,
What splendor at the shrine must dwell !

The dazzling sun, at noontide hour,
Forth from his flaming vase,
Flinging o'er earth the golden shower,
Till vale and mountain blaze,
But shows, O Lord, one beam of Thine :
What, then, the day where Thou dost shine !

Ah ! how shall these dim eyes endure
That noon of living rays,
Or, how my spirit so impure
Upon Thy brightness gaze ?
Anoint, O Lord, anoint my sight,
And robe me for that world of light.

As this little book is kindly sold by the publishers without any profits to themselves, for the benefit of St. Johnland, a brief account of the same is subjoined.

ST. JOHNLAND.

ST. JOHNLAND lies on the north shore of Long Island, about five miles east of the town of Northport, and about forty miles east of the city of New York. It covers an area of over five hundred acres, one-half of which, or somewhat less, is good arable land of light soil; the remainder woodland, which, when needed, can be cleared for tillage. The northern boundary lies immediately on the Sound. A large part of it is an extended line of bold bluff, covered by a fine old grove of chestnut, oak, and cedar. This is a protection against northerly winds for the gentle slope, declining southward, which is the site of the several buildings with which the village is already begun. The place throughout is diversified with hill and plain, with meadow and wood, and has numerous sites commanding views of scenery which would be thought beautiful anywhere.

Little as yet has been done in carrying out the original design of providing cottage homes for certain classes of the industrious poor who could be supplied with work from the city. This has been delayed in consequence of the want of easy conveyance to the place, which, however, will soon be afforded. In the spring an extension of the railroad will be finished, with a station not more than a mile and a half distant.

In the meanwhile, much has been done in the way of charitable institutions, which, indeed, are likely to become the main feature of the place, making it a domain of charity. Among these the principal are the following :

ST. JOHN'S INN,

THE OLD MAN'S HOME.

This consists of three buildings, a large and central mansion connected by enclosed corridors with a spacious wing on either side, erected entirely at the expense of Mr. John D. Wolfe, the President of St. Johnland. It is well equipped in every respect for its purpose, which is the entertainment, in their declining years, of respectable Christian men who through the vicissitudes of life have become unable to command the comforts of a home. Accommodation is provided for forty such inmates, but only half this number will be received for the present, one of the wings of the building being occupied by orphan or destitute children. The terms for an old man are three dollars per week, which covers all expenses but clothing.

An extension of this edifice northwards contains apartments for ten grown girls, orphans, under training by the Sisters in the several industrial and household departments of the settlement.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE,

built by Mrs. Spencer and Miss Wolfe, provides all things necessary for the comfort and education of twenty-five little ones, crippled and orphaned, or otherwise destitute of the motherly care essential to their impaired physical condition. Most of the young inmates of this house were formerly patients of the children's ward in St. Luke's Hospital, transferred hither

when no longer susceptible of benefit from surgical treatment. As they become old enough, they are transferred to either the Boys' House or the grown girls' department, and taught the type-setting or some other suitable trade whereby they may hereafter support themselves. The patronage for a beneficiary of the Crippled Children's Home costs \$100 per annum, with such contributions to the child's wardrobe as the patron may be disposed to make.

THE BOYS' HOUSE,

built by a mother in memorial of a beloved boy, recently opened, is the house of the older boys—a fine, cheerful house, with a handsome school-room, a library or social room for evening recreation, two good dormitories, and convenient lavatory. It is designed for thirty boys, has already twenty-four occupants, under the schoolmaster and his wife, who reside in the building. The sum of \$150 per annum is named as the charge for a boy not entered as a printing apprentice nor under training in the garden on the farm, but simply getting his board, clothing, and a plain education. For an apprentice to the printing or other industrial work, there is an entrance fee asked of \$150, which is in full of all demands.

THE TYPE-SETTING ROOMS

of the stereotype foundry, as already mentioned, give a remunerative trade and consequent means of self-support to lame or otherwise enfeebled boys and girls. Of this class of beneficiaries we have had twenty-five boys and five girls, and the average number of apprentices is twelve, who, under their able and faithful superintendent, are constantly turning out work for

New York publishers which would do credit to well-established city houses.

THE CHURCH,

among the institutions of the place that might have been mentioned first, is the central bond of them all. The edifice, built by Mr. Adam Norrie, is a goodly one, graceful in proportion and design, with nave and transept, furnished with an organ, bell, etc., and capable of holding upwards of three hundred persons, standing in the midst of the rising village. The resident pastor holds regular services in the church, and more familiar devotional meetings among his people.

Here is that "Church of the Testimony of Jesus," which the founder once desired to establish in the city, but which is now most appropriately the church of a parish composed of the ministrants and recipients of charities, bearing practical testimony to Jesus. As an Episcopal Church recognizing the wider church of the brotherhood in Christ, it should commend St. Johnland to all who desire to see the former in more fraternal communion with sound branches of the latter. It is one of the germs appearing here and there, of Christian union.

WHENCE THE FUNDS FOR ST. JOHNLAND, PAST AND PRESENT ?

The answer would be a long story, telling of the liberality of those who supplied the means for beginning the enterprise, thus encouraging it, although then they had not much confidence in it themselves; of the subsequent benefactions of those who in large sums provided for the erection of the buildings and making other improvements; of the contributions

of many for the support of the beneficiaries of the place, etc. For such information those who desire it are referred to an account of St. Johnland, to be had of Mr. Whittaker, No. 2 Bible House, of which a new edition, bringing the account to a later date, will appear early in the year.

But without waiting for that, it is hoped that our readers, from what has been here said and from other sources, are satisfied that the work is worthy of their patronage; and if so, that they will be disposed, according to their ability, to aid it. This they may do by contributing to the support of its beneficiaries of different classes, according to the rates specified in the preceding pages. These are less than cost, but even at these rates many of the children and several of the aged inmates of the Inn are unprovided for, whom we should be glad to have remembered. The avails of the stereotype foundry are considerable, with the prospect of steady increase. Patronage for this branch of industry is solicited of city publishers, who may see specimens of the work at the Bible House.

The produce of the farm and vegetable grounds, of course, is valuable where it finds so many consumers—the present population of the place, young and old, being more than one hundred.

The chief revenue of St. Johnland is in the good-will of its friends. This we have largely enjoyed, and would acknowledge with gratitude to them, and still more to Him whose instruments they are in bestowing upon us the signs of His favor. We humbly pray for its continuance.

Among those to whom the subscriber would commend this charity, or combination of charities, he hopes may reckon many of his former pupils who are now “well to do” in the world. Should these pages meet the eye of any one of them, perhaps he may be inclined to cheer his old School Father in the last work of his life.

Donations will be appreciated of whatever amount, and appropriated either to substantial improvements on the place or to meet its current expenses. Those for the former purpose may be made to Mr. HOWARD POTTER, Treasurer, Brown Brothers & Co., New York; those for the latter to the subscriber, to whom all communications about St. Johnland may be addressed. Clothing of all kinds is always acceptable.

W. A. MUHLENBERG.

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL, New York, December, 1871.

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES
OF THE
CORPORATION OF ST. JOHN LAND.

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VICE-PRESIDENT.
ADAM NORRIE.

TREASURER.
HOWARD POTTER.

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ROBERT S. HOLT,	HENRY C. POTTER.
	F. G. FOSTER.

The Objects of the Society, as declared in the Certificate of Incorporation, are as follows :

To hold the estate known as St. Johnland, Suffolk County, New York ; to have the supervision of its affairs ; and to see that it be rightly used for the purposes for which it has been created, which purposes, in the main, are as follows, viz. :

First. To provide cheap and comfortable homes, together with the means of social and moral improvement, for deserving families from among the working classes, particularly of the City of New York, and such as can carry on their work at St. Johnland ; but this provision shall never be used for pecuniary emolument, either to the Society or to any of the Agents in its employ.

Second. To maintain a home for aged men in destitute circumstances, especially all Communicants, who are esteemed entitled to it by the Churches to which they belong ; to care for friendless children and youth, and especially cripples, by giving them home, schooling, Christian training, and some trade or occupation by which they can earn their future livelihood ; and generally to do such other Christian offices as shall from time to time be required, and are practicable, by the Society, consistently with its benevolent designs.

Third. To assist indigent boys and young men who desire literary education, with a view to the Gospel Ministry, by affording them the opportunity for such education, and, at the same time, means of self-support by some useful employment. An Evangelical school, or college, chiefly for training for the Ministry, would come within the scope of the Society.

Lastly, and as embracing its whole, to give form and practical application to the principles of Brotherhood in Christ, in an organized congregation or parish, constituted by settled residents of St. Johnland.

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the Society of St. Johnland, a corporation created in the year 1870, under the laws of the State of New York, or to the Treasurer thereof, for the time being, for its corporate purposes, —————

